

University of Chicago Library

Report to Heads of Technical Services of Large Research Libraries

June 2005

1. Shelving capacity

The “big news” from Chicago is that the University Board of Trustees has recently funded a major expansion to the Regenstein Library. This expansion will be comprised of a high density storage and retrieval facility and will increase the total volume capacity of the library system by 3.5 million volumes, allowing space for the next 20-25 years of collection growth. The building of this facility on campus and connected to the main library will obviate the need for off-campus storage, allowing the entire collection to be on-site with materials being retrieved and in the patron’s hands within 5 minutes of the request. We are in the architect selection phase of the project, and expect the project to be completed in the Spring of 2009.

This project is very exciting. We also realize that preparation for the move of materials – selection, preservation, barcoding when needed, physical movement, etc. will consume a great deal of our energies over the next several years. We are very fortunate in that the Board of Trustees allocation including funding that should support most of these activities, the library will not need to absorb the costs through internal reallocation.

2. Space for preservation/conservation activities

The funding for the new facility including monies for a new state of the art preservation and conservation facility, to be housed in the new facility.

3. Recon of CJK materials

Also included in the allocation was funding to complete our CJK retrospective conversion. Within the next four years OCLC will convert the remaining 72,000 titles and the records will be added to our online catalog.

4. Inventory of hidden collection

A major project is to identify our “hidden collections”, to identify the best processing approach for each collection, and to prioritize the work. Although the recon of the CJK collection will complete the conversion of our cataloged collections, we still have many groups of materials that have never been fully processed – or in some cases never processed at all. These groups range from collections of archival materials, to unprocessed gift materials, to large sets that could benefit from analytic

processing. Part of our approach will be to look toward creative approaches for access where appropriate – some collections are best suited to full MARC records, while others could better benefit from access through our web pages instead of full-MARC access through the catalog. The task is daunting, I just had a report that the working group estimates that our unprocessed microfiche collections alone would be taller than Mount Everest if placed end-to-end!

5. Federating search system

The library has contracted with Ex-Libris for Metalib, and we plan to have this operational and available to the public by the beginning of Fall Quarter 2005.

6. ERM

We continue to look forward to the implementation of an ERM, although no final selection of a vendor has been made. As a customer of Dynix (now SirsiDynix) we are working with them to develop their ERM and will make our final decision when that product is released.

7. Staffing for Technical Services

No major changes have occurred in TS staffing levels during the past few months.

8. State of the library budget

The library continues to receive additional funds for the collections although the budget is extremely tight in the areas of operations and salaries. For FY06 we received a \$200,00 increase to the base budget to support digital activities.